

# Religious Education in Europe

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## Structure

### Introduction

#### (1) Religious Education in Europe – a ‘multi-layered’ subject

This part introduces the situation of Religious Education in Europe. Three types can be identified: education into religion, education about religion, learning from religion.

Many layers shape each existing approach e.g. *religious landscape, role and value of religion, state – church relation, education system, history and politics.*

Each approach to Religious Education has a biography. *Introduction of the religious landscape and of three main models of organisation of Religious Education*

#### (2) Developments

Current debates on Religious Education from different countries

- Estonia: Non-confessional RE in a post-socialist context
- South Eastern Europe: The search for contextual solutions
- France: A new perspective on laïcité?
- Zürich / Switzerland: New subject “Religion and Culture”

#### (3) How can we compare different approaches to RE?

Different perspectives how to compare approaches to RE

- The “overview approach”
- The “contextual approach”
- The “common aims approach”

#### (4) Challenges

- Speaking about RE means speaking about education and schooling
- A new awareness of religion and culture is needed
- Standards in education and standards in religious education

## Introduction

My presentation is based on experiences in national and European contexts. On the national level I work at the Comenius-Institut, a Protestant centre for research and development in education. Our institute organises projects and activities in areas where the Protestant churches, teacher and school associations are active in education, within their own institutions, for RE in public schools and as actors in civil society in the field of education policy. The institute's policy is based on collaboration of the 23 Lutheran, Reformed and United Protestant territorial churches in Germany, teacher and school associations. Our projects are mainly financed through church money, but sometimes we receive public funds for specific projects.

My main responsibility lies in the area of Education and Europe, comparative Religious Education, interreligious and intercultural education, I have a special interest in alternative methods in teaching and learning, and how the relationship between education and religion can be shaped today.

My presentation relates also to the work of the Intereuropean Commission on Church and School.

The Commission with correspondents in 20 European countries acts as

- a clearing house for dialogue about education and religion in Europe
- a forum for exchange
- a platform for common initiatives.

ICCS came into existence in the 1950s; main activities include organising European conferences, working groups and publications. ICCS is a participating nongovernmental organisation NGO at the Council of Europe and an associated member of the Conference of European Churches CEC. Both relations are important: To have dialogue with the political institutions in Europe about education that takes account of religion and to cooperate with the churches in Europe in this field.

At the moment ICCS benefits enormously from support by Norwegian sources and we are happy that the Church Educational Centre IKO has started a project with the title "Building Bridges in Europe" that includes support for ICCS for some years.

Our collaboration in the framework of ICCS is guided mainly by two aims. They can be seen as reference for our activities and for the collaboration with other European networks and organisations. These two aims are:

- 1) That the importance of religion in education achieves a higher profile.**
- 2) That European education policy is based on an integral concept of education, as found in Judeo-Christian and Humanist traditions.**

## **(1) RE in Europe – a ‘multi-layered’ subject**

There is widespread provision of Religious Education as a school subject in most of the countries of Europe. In our context we mean with RE any kind of religious teaching in public or private school, not in families or in the organisations of the faith communities. The regulations are different. In some countries emphasis is given mainly to education *into* religion, introducing pupils into one specific faith tradition. In a majority of countries this is not seen as a task of public schools, but of families and religious communities.

Education *about* religion is another perspective. It refers to religious knowledge and religious studies. This is a common aim even if we compare differently organised RE approaches. In a world where religion is important for the majority of the people we need knowledge and orientation about religion.

Education *from* religion gives pupils the opportunity to consider different answers to major religious and moral issues to help them developing their own views in a reflective way. The experience and identity of the pupils is at the centre of teaching and learning.

It is a kind of idealistic view because in practice often elements from all these perspectives are integrated.

Different countries, with their own local, regional or national context have different approaches to religious education. What are the reasons for the existing differences? The factors, among others, or the layers that give rise to different approaches are the religious landscape in the country, the role and value of religion in society, the relation between state and religion, the structure of the education system and its underlying philosophical assumptions, history and politics.

The range of approaches goes from no religious education in public schools (mainly in France, also in Montenegro, Slovenia and in Albania for different reasons) to models with exclusive responsibility of the state to cooperative models where state and religious communities share responsibility for RE, to confessional or denominational approaches where RE in school is the responsibility of religious communities.

In many countries – like in Norway – there has been a development from a confessionally oriented approach to a non-confessional one, especially in those countries where a state church was dominant (or still is), such as England, Denmark, Sweden or your country Norway.

Where churches and religious communities still have a legal say in public education, they see their involvement in education and RE in public schools mainly as a service to society and as a field of close cooperation with the state rather than primarily as an activity to nurture church members.

Nowadays RE as a subject in schools is taught chiefly in line with the criteria of general education. It is understood as learning about religion (knowledge based) and learning from religion (based on the experience and existential questions of the students).

## **(2) Developments in Religious Education in different countries**

Before introducing the situation in Estonia as a first example I want to mention three general features or experiences that influence the place of religion in society in central and eastern Europe today and also the discussion about RE:

- (a) *Memory and yearning for the time before communism.* In the Hungarian society before 1948 religion and church played a central role in the life of people. The religious milieus were strong and well structured. This model has been suppressed due to the direct influence of the Soviet Union in the development of Hungary. And now people like to re-connect to this time before communism.
- (b) *The experience of the contradiction between private and state ideology in education.* The communist regimes tried to educate a new socialist oriented type of human being, weakening the influence of parents and forcing the communist ideology. Those parents who tried to educate their children in a different way had to do that secretly. Out of that experience many do not have a great trust in the public education system.
- (c) *The French or American model.* What level of separation between public and private education do we need especially concerning Christian education? This is a contested issue nowadays. In how far is religion just a private matter and to which extend does religion influence public life and politics?

The background of a contested situation concerning religion and education has to be taken into account when we look at developments in central and eastern countries.

Concerning the religious landscape you can differentiate between mainly Catholic, Orthodox and more or less secularized countries. Some of the countries are seen as highly religious (Poland, Romania) others as extremely secularized or anti-religious (East Germany, Czech Republic, Ukraine) or others as western Christian oriented (Hungary, Estonia, Lithuania).

### **Estonia: Non-confessional RE in a post-socialist context**

Estonia has 1.4 Mio inhabitants, 65% Estonians, 28 % Russian, many of them with a Russian citizenship. Up to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Russian influence dominated in the society. The situation of RE in Estonia today is shaped by the long influence of the Soviet Atheism. In 1940 Estonia was annexed by the Soviet Union, RE was forbidden, the theological faculty in Tartu was closed. Activities of the churches were very restricted. Atheist propaganda influenced the people and public education has been hostile against any kind of religion. You can say that almost all people over 30 (the age of pupil's parents and also teachers!) have experienced the influence of a strong atheistic education and their knowledge of religion is little or may contain many prejudices. The legacy of the former totalitarian regime has made people distrustful

of and careful about new „prophets“ and ideologies. They want to find their place in the pluralistic world by themselves.

The religious landscape nowadays looks like the following:

### **Estonia (I) Religious Landscape**

(Census 2000, persons aged 15 and older)

• <b>Lutheran:</b>	<b>152 000</b>	<b>14%</b>
• <b>Orthodox:</b>	<b>144 000</b>	<b>13%</b>
• Baptist:	6 000	
• Roman-Catholic:	6 000	
• Jehovah Witness:	4 000	
• Pentecostal:	2 600	
• Old Believers:	2 500	
• Adventist:	1 500	
• Muslim:	1 400	
• Taara- or Earth Believer:	1 000	
• Atheist:	69 000	6%
• <b>No religious affiliation:</b>	<b>382 000</b>	

Take into account that in the 1930s about 95% were Christians.

Up to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century RE has been taught up to 6 hours per week. After independence in 1991 RE could be re-installed in school. It was introduced as a voluntary subject.

According to the education act RE is a non-confessional subject and optional in school. It needs at least 15 pupils per school stage to organise it.

In primary schools parents enrol their children for RE. There is no alternative subject

Little information is available about the number of schools where RE is taught (maybe 10% nowadays?)

Aims of RE are

- Knowledge about different religions
- Developing an open identity
- Developing social and ecological awareness
- Supporting pupils moral development
- Developing skills for responsible choices.

Perspectives for RE in Estonia include guarantee and support for RE as well as the introduction of religious topics in other subjects.

## **South Eastern Europe: The search for contextual solutions**

After the radical political change in the 1990s in central and Eastern Europe the question of public education came up. Many agreed that the former instrumentalization of public education for the ideology of the state should be changed in a radical way. In some countries the state socialism has been quite successful concerning the role of religion in society. In the former GDR and in the Czech Republic the majority of the population can be seen as anti-religious. In other countries like Poland or Hungary the churches played a more significant role concerning the national culture and survived in a better shape.

New opportunities for religious education came up. Churches received former church school buildings back and could work out agreements with the state to implement (again) religious education in schools. But the teacher staff has not changed mainly new head teachers were installed but you could not dismiss all brave state obedient teachers.

The Open Society Institute for South East Europe in Ljubljana has summarized existing research and documents about RE in a report called: Religion and Schooling in Open Society. A Framework for Informed Dialogue (2004). They start with some opinions and prejudices that exist, I guess not only in this part of Europe:

- Religion and Church have no place in State schools
- Religious education is indoctrination
- Learning about the main religious tradition in our country through schooling is essential for cultural understanding and preserving our national identity
- RE must be part of schooling if our society is to address the moral crisis of today's youth

This list shows some of the difficulties in the current development. But a controversial debate is not always negative.

The report recognises also developments in other regions of Europe when it states:

“During the last two decades, the aim in many confessional approaches in religious education in schools has changed as well. The main aim is not any more to produce religious commitment to one particular faith but to enable students to deal with different religious traditions, ethical conflicts, existential situations of crisis and religious plurality. In this sense, these confessional approaches to religious education are similar to nonconfessional approaches. (2004, 11)

The report argues that even without a particular school subject you could speak of religious education in school when religious knowledge is part of any other subject like history, literature or language.

Concerning criteria the report mentions.

- Human rights conventions and international education standards are sufficient to guide national policy on religion and schooling
- As far as a child's personal religious or spiritual development, families and religious institutions are responsible, not schools
- Teaching in schools about the various main religions is necessary to increase tolerance and social cohesion

The conclusions of the report are open for further dialogue e.g.

"In an open society, the appropriate role of the State regarding its relation to religious institutions is to guarantee their group rights, as well as the individual rights of their members. (...) the State should establish a model of education in public schools which prevents indoctrination.

(...) A pure legalistic human rights approach to religions and schooling in an open society, however, may not be sufficient to inform and guide decisions about educational aspects of a child's life. (...)

Teaching about religions as a nonconfessional model of religious education may be an appropriate policy for open society. Questions arise, however, as to whether teaching about religions, in itself, is sufficient and whether it will actually develop tolerance and social cohesion. It appears that much depends on the teaching perspectives and methods." (27f.)

### **France: A new perspective on laïcité?**

France is a country with a strict separation of state and religion. This is due to historical reasons. The revolution was fighting against despotism and against religion, mainly the Catholic Church.

The constitution of the Fifth Republic (1958) declares in article 1:

#### **France Constitution de la République, Article 1:**

La France est une République indivisible, laïque, démocratique et sociale. Elle assure l'égalité devant la loi de tous les citoyens sans distinction d'origine, de race ou de religion. Elle respecte toutes les croyances.

"France shall be an indivisible, secular, democratic and social Republic. It shall ensure the equality of all citizens before the law, without distinction of origin, race or religion. It shall respect all beliefs. It shall be organised on a decentralised basis."

The separation of state and religion is based on the law from 1905 and well established in the French society. The independence of the state and religion is called *laïcité*, a very French term and difficult to translate. It has confined religion to the private domain, while a view of national identity that emphasizes "Frenchness" is very dominant.

However the Catholic Church has a high number of private schools. (78.8 % Catholics in France) About 20% of the students attend these schools.

Schools have always been a battlefield (a bone of contention) concerning *laïcité*. Religious education has been abolished by law in 1882. It was substituted by moral oriented civics. Traditionally one weekday is reserved for catechesis outside school

Different developments have brought up a new debate about the role of religion in schools and about teaching religion. One fact is the high number of Muslims in French society (5 Mio Muslims out of 58 Mio). There have been different events and controversies when young Muslim girls came with their headscarves in school. Due to *laïcité* wearing religious symbols is strictly forbidden in schools.

However, a debate began in the late 1980s over whether or not pupils should be informed about religions in schools. Parents and teachers saw a need for that e.g. to understand history, art and language.

In 1989 the curriculum for history and geography were changed and more emphasis was given to education about religions. In 1996 some study of Islam was introduced through programmes of study in French and history.

In 2001 the minister of education Jack Lang has asked Régis Debray to produce a report about the present situation and to give recommendations how to change the situation. The title of the report is: Teaching religious facts in a (secular) laicistic school."

His report contains a number of recommendations including introducing the study of religions, not as a separate subject, but as a theme across a range of subjects, including history and philosophy. Debray also recommended the establishment of a national institute of 'sciences of religion' in order to facilitate initial and in-service training of primary and secondary teachers of religions. The European Institute of Religious Science was set up in 2002, and steps are now being taken to prepare appropriate courses for teachers and other educationists.

These developments represent a shift in French government policy. The state's principle of *laïcité* is still at the heart of the policy, but, according to Debray's view, rather than being anti-religious, *laïcité* guarantees the individual's freedom of conscience to have or not to have a religion. As he puts it with regard to Islam: '*Laïcité* is an opportunity for Islam in France and French Islam is an opportunity for *laïcité*.' (Debray 2002, 42).

### **Zürich / Switzerland: New subject "Religion and Culture"**

In Switzerland the responsibility for education including RE is with the 26 Kantons, the regional political entities. Due to differences in the religious landscape, tradition, history and politics, denominational and 'neutral' RE can be found in Switzerland. Especially in the big cities a situation of increasing plurality of cultures and religions can be recognized. Due to these developments the education authorities in the Kanton of Zürich have worked out a new subject for the upper grade of the common 10 years comprehensive school. Instead of the existing confessional cooperative subject they want to introduce a new subject called "Religion and Culture". Religion and Culture is seen as inter-

twined and as changing. We live in a complex world with more and more individualized religious convictions. The main objective of the subject is to develop “a competence in dealing with religious questions and traditions”.

Teaching in religion has no place in the classroom, but teaching about religion and learning from religion should be organised. Different strands are used:

- historical-descriptive
- -societal- political
- life world oriented.

The subject should encourage the competence of changing perspectives. Encounters with lived religion are central; representatives of religious communities have worked out contents for the teaching and also the experience of the students is a starting point and content of the teaching-learning process. The main method is called “Erkundungsgänge”, investigation courses. It is an open, flexible method oriented to support four leading aims:

sensitisation, knowledge and understanding, orientation, communication.

Process orientation of the teaching and learning is central; one can ask if the religious/non-religious views of the students can be neglected.

### **England: Learning through religion**

RE in England is based on a multi-religious approach. Two main elements of RE in England and Wales are emphasized in legal requirements:

*An agreed syllabus should reflect that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions in Great Britain. (Education Reform Act 1988)*

*An agreed syllabus must not be designed to convert pupils, or to urge a particular religion or religious belief on pupils.*

Many years a phenomenological approach has been the dominant perspective dealing with six world religions either faith oriented or issue oriented. Now two aims are seen as equally important:

**Learning about religion** (religious knowledge) includes enquiry into, and investigation of the nature of religion, its beliefs, teachings and ways of life, sources, practices and forms of expressions.

**Learning from religion** (experience based) is concerned with developing pupils’ reflection on and response to their own and others’ experiences in the light of their learning about religion.

In 2004 a non statutory framework for Religious Education was published. Its aim is to give guidance to those who are responsible for the local syllabi and to improve the quality of religious education across the country. Here we can see how RE is intertwined with the whole curriculum. The framework is closely linked to two general aims of school education:

**Aim 1:** The school curriculum should aim to provide opportunities for all pupils to learn and achieve.

**Aim 1:** The school curriculum should aim to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experience of life. (QCA, 2004, 8)

At the heart of the national framework for RE is the focus on ultimate questions and ethical issues. "RE seeks to develop pupils' awareness of themselves and others".

The main purpose of the non-statutory framework is to show the contribution of RE to learning across the curriculum. That means:

- Promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through RE
- Promoting citizenship through RE
- Promoting personal, social and health education through RE
- Promoting key skills through RE
- Promoting other aspects of the curriculum

### **(3) How can we compare different approaches to RE?**

There are different ways or perspectives to compare approaches to RE:

#### *The overview approach*

The issue of RE in Europe is a complex one. A few years ago I have started to work out an overview with basic information about RE in the 46 countries that are a member of the Council of Europe.

I have used five columns to provide information about the school subject:

- 1) Approaches to RE (mainly confessional vs. non-confessional)
- 2) The status of the subject: optional / compulsory / optional-compulsory
- 3) Substitute or alternative subject
- 4) Responsibility for the syllabus
- 5) Special remarks

Neglecting the fact that information is not available from all the countries the reaction on this overview was ambivalent and it still is. Readers appreciated to see that RE exists in more or less every European country (some exceptions like France, Montenegro, and Slovenia) and to compare the situation in their own country with others. But there are good reasons to be critical towards such an overview. The danger lies in the fact that same labels can have completely different meanings. "Confessional" in one country, a label to be used for the responsibility of religious communities can mean a completely different thing in one country than in another and vice versa non-confessional can be also very different. Remember the multi-layered perspective that each approach to RE is shaped by different layers.

And each approach to RE has a long and dynamic history that depends on these layers and on developments in society.

### *The contextual approach*

A second perspective for comparative work can be named the contextual approach. This is based on the conviction that you need to understand the context in order to understand RE. A good example is so-called 'confessional' RE. In the UK, 'confessional' means indoctrination (Copley 1997, p. 101) while in Germany it just implies that RE is based on the constitutional RE clause. One-to-one comparisons will often be lacking in respect to contextuality. Contextual approaches should be given preference for purposes of comparative religious education (cf. Schweitzer 2004). You cannot get an idea about the new developments in RE in many Eastern European countries when you are not aware of the history of the last fifty years.

### *The "common aims approach"*

Another view arises when you compare different catalogues of aims or objectives for RE. You find commonalities on this level.

RE should make *orientation* from religious beliefs and experiences possible and RE should provide *knowledge* about religion(s) and other worldview. The role of *religious experience* is contested. Some argue that in a secularized society the school is the first and only place where pupils can learn about and from religion because families do no longer provide any kind of religious upbringing. Should this have consequences for RER in schools?

## **(4) Challenges**

### **4.1 Speaking about Religious Education means speaking about education and schooling as well**

When we have no clear vision about what education is for then it might be difficult to have a clear vision of religious education. Education cannot be seen as neutral; it has always to do with values, norms and interests of different shareholders.

You can also ask: Does education need a religious or a spiritual dimension and if the answer is yes, how should that be arranged.

A quite often mentioned attainment target for education is to encourage "tolerance and respect for the culture of others" also included in official political statements.

ICCS contributes to this debate in challenging limited views of education, focused mainly on economic needs and argues for a more comprehensive understanding of education.

This can be linked up with a report that was delivered a few years ago: Learning. The Treasure Within (1996) Jacques Delors the former president of the European Commission has chaired an international commission on Education dealing with perspectives for education.

International Commission on Education for the twenty-first century: *'Learning: The Treasure Within'* (Report 1996). In this well received report to UNESCO, the commission based their work on four basic principles, four pillars as a frame for formal and informal education:

- *learning to know* (acquiring the instruments of understanding);
- *learning to do* (to be able to act creatively on one's environment);
- *learning to live together*, learning to live with others (so as to participate and co-operate with other people in all human activities);
- *learning to be* (the aim of development is the complete fulfilment of man in all the richness of his personality).

These are no more than basic principles that should be taken seriously when it comes to formal education arrangements. The four principles underline that the International Commission is in favour of a comprehensive understanding of education, an integrated view, where *body-mind-spirit* are not seen as separate and independent parts of human beings and where spirituality and religion can achieve a new relevance. They describe the task of education as follows:

'Education must ... simultaneously provide maps of a complex world in constant turmoil and the compass that will enable people to find their way in it.' (Report 1996, 85). Orientation is needed in a comprehensive sense.

#### **4.2 A new awareness of religion and culture in needed**

Religion has not disappeared, but it has changed in Europe. Interestingly the religious sociologist Grace Davies speaks about 'believing without belonging', and 'vicarious religion' (2002). Her empirical studies proof the fact that there is more belief around than being obvious by looking on activists in religious communities and that there is more sympathy to those who are still active than we do expect. Roughly speaking these concepts explain that there is more sympathy for religion also in its institutionalized form than there are formal members or adherents. "The term 'vicarious' denotes "religion performed by an active minority *on behalf of* – that's the crucial phrase – a much larger number who, implicitly at least, understand and approve of what the minority are doing." (2002, 13, emphasis by G. Davie). Although the concept of 'secularization', dominant for many years, has lost its momentum in social sciences (Luhmann 2000) it is a more or less accepted view that institutionalized religions, especially Christianity have lost influence and relevance in society. Institutionalized religion is no longer a central system but one out of many sub-systems in a plural setting of other sub-systems (Luhmann speaks of functional differentiation of society). But religion has not disappeared (as some social scientists expected). It exists in more differentiated and individualised forms. Religiosity has become – similar to identity – a task of self-determination. Due to the existing 'market place of religious and non-religious offers, has to create his/her own view on religion, and the label of a 'patchwork religion' is often used for this kind of process. It is not about dealing with his/her own religion but to face a

number of other religions and world views which are present in society and life world. In western societies no longer one religion has an exclusive situation, even not in the area of public schools. Plural settings in school and in the classroom become more and more common. And more and more teachers are getting sensible to the individualized form of religion of their pupils as the context and content of the teaching. Their teaching task is to combine this with other dimension like knowledge about the different world religions and experiences of their believers. But just presenting a kind of "objective" knowledge about religions and world views seems to be not adequate for Religious Education.

This new awareness of the individualized religion can challenge the dominant relationship between education and religion.

Enlightenment and secularization have led to a situation in Western Europe where religion is no longer a central issue in the area of education philosophy. More generally one can state that modern knowledge includes no spiritual dimension. Religion and spirituality have no longer a central impact in the mainstream disciplines of sociology, history, philosophy, education, or cultural studies.

Mainstream education philosophers normally no longer refer to religious interpretation of life, or to religiously based values and experiences. As for intercultural education, which has become increasingly relevant during the last twenty years with its aim at empathy towards the other, dialogue and the competence of 'dancing with difference' (Moore 1998), the dimension of religion is neglected or ignored. This existing situation is perceived to be critical, especially by those who emphasise the necessity of recognising spirituality in education. "Educational authority at all levels is challenged to take the challenges of spirituality seriously; to allow it to change what constitutes learning" (Tacey 2002, 171). By introducing the word 'spirituality' we demonstrate our awareness of the increasing use of the term here we are aware about the increasing use of the term in casual expression and in different contexts, such as *spirit* of place, *spirit* of the time of the *spirit* of group. Indeed, in some countries, the spiritual development of students is increasingly a concern for schools although this is chiefly in a 'secular sense'.<sup>1</sup> By using 'spirituality' here we share a broad understanding of the term including its religious or more general connotations. Central characteristics are the integral connection to education and a critical view to dominant models of modern education.

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<sup>1</sup> In England and Wales it is required that a balanced and broadly based curriculum "promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society" (Education Reform Act 1988 chapter 40 part 1 Section 1:2).

### 4.3 International standards?

There is a debate among scholars of RE towards international agreement about basic criteria for what should be considered quality religious education, especially in terms of the countries within the European Union, and that such criteria can only be achieved by the way of mutually critical dialogue.

It also makes sense to think about minimum requirements or basic standards for religious education that should be guaranteed in all countries irrespective of their special situation. Schweitzer (2002) has suggested five examples for such standards in respect to RE in schools:

- Religion must and can be taught in line with the criteria of general education (educational quality).
- RE is of relevance to the public and must be taught in line with this relevance (contribution to general education).
- RE must include some type of interdenominational and interreligious learning which are in line with the increasingly pluralist situation in many countries (dialogical quality, contribution to peace and tolerance).
- RE must be based on the children's right to religion and religious education (child-centered approach based on children's rights, cf. Schweitzer 2000 and 2005)
- RE teachers must be professionals in the sense that they have reached a level of self-reflexivity based on academic work which allows for a critical appropriation of their religious backgrounds and biographies (professional teaching).

This clearly is not a complete list but the examples may still be helpful. Among others, they indicate that such criteria, if accepted by an international body of religious education specialists, could give religious educators in different countries a better basis for setting forth their demands within their own national contexts. Similarly, such criteria and requirements could be helpful in the much needed dialogue with the European Union about religious education.

## **Resources**

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